

STATE OF THE VILLAGE 2022

I'm Elissa Leonard, current board chair, and I would like to welcome everyone in person and on the phone or by video to the 108th Annual Meeting of Chevy Chase Village.

This is our first in person Annual Meeting since 2019. We adapted well to the pandemic because of our excellent staff: Village Manager Shana Davis-Cook, Police Chief John Fitzgerald, Jerry Lesesne, director of public works, Ellen Sands director of municipal operations, Dimitri Protos director of finance, and all the staff and personnel... we all thank you very much.

It is customary at the annual meeting to provide an oral overview of where the Village stands, as well as highlight some of our activities over the previous year and what to expect in the year ahead.

First of all, the state of the village continues to be excellent.

Fiscally: We are in very fine shape. Coming Up: Our Board Treasurer Gary Crockett will give a financial overview, but just to step on his report a little bit... we expect to end the current fiscal year with a surplus, bringing our reserve balance well over 13 million dollars.

The FY2023 budge reflects a return to "sort of" normal post pandemic operations, as well as some increased costs due to inflation.

- Please refer to the written reports for more details, but here are highlights of some activities past present and future:
- We installed Village's first all electric vehicle and installed electric charging stations at Village Hall.
- We authorized the police department implementation of a body-worn camera program, which will begin this summer.

- We approved the installation of a speed hump in the 100 block of Newlands between Brookville and Broad Branch. We are monitoring traffic on the east side that seems to be affected by the closure of Beech Drive to the rush hour traffic it used to handle.
- We updated the directory and the website acknowledging the Village's founder Francis Newlands views on race as being incompatible with the inclusive, welcoming, and more diverse community that the Village is today.
- We did **not** do our normal spring planting **last** year, due to the 17 year cicada emergence. But in the fall and spring this year we have planted, or will plant, over 45 trees.
- For the third year in a row, we received the PLANT People Loving and Nurturing Trees Award from the Maryland Department of Natural resources.
- We also maintained the Village's designation as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day foundation, and this State of the Village report will include a reading of the Proclamation so that we can continue that designation through 2022.
- We adopted Juneteenth National Independence Day as an official Village holiday.
- We amended the Charter to adopt a mail-in election process. The amendments include moving election day from the first to the third Saturday in May.
- We amended the building code to allow the installation of electric vehicle chargers within setbacks and rights of way.
- We authorized the Village Manager to determine that certain vaccines are required as a fitness for duty condition for employment.
- We remind everyone that no gas-powered leaf blowers are allowed, and no cosmetic lawn pesticides are allowed.
- Our biggest upcoming projects largely center on stormwater runoff issues. We also have an ongoing maintenance program on the brick sidewalks and we hope residents will continue to point out all areas that require attention

I will now read the Tree City USA proclamation

--READ PROCLAMATION HERE--

Last year the Board said farewell to Richard Ruda of Newland Street, and welcomed new Board Member Lou Morsberger of Cedar Parkway.

Now I will read a Proclamation recognizing Former Board Member Richard Ruda.

We so value our long time staff at Village Hall. I have the pleasure of awarding Certificates of Appreciation to several tonight.

- Clarence Ricks, Public Works Steward, for over 30 years of service
- Adventino Dasilva, Police Lieutenant, for over 20 years of service,
- Jackie Parker, Public Safety Coordinator for over 20 years of service.
- And of course Village Manager Shana Davis Cook for over 23 years of service. What can we say? Ms. Davis Cook is the glue that keeps it all together in the Village. We are proud to recognize her deep knowledge of our institutional history for the past two decades, as well as her extraordinary work during the pandemic these past two plus years.

To end my oral report, I would like to mention the Village residents we lost since our last annual meeting.

- Temple Grassi, Connecticut Avenue
- Mary Candon, Grafton Street
- C. King Mallory, (former) Magnolia Parkway
- Denise Williamson, Oliver Street
- Edward Symes, Newlands Street
- Judith Levin (former) Grafton Street

Thank you.

As always I am grateful to live in Chevy Chase Village. I'm grateful for the staff, for the Board, for all the volunteer commission and committee members, for all the residents, for my neighbors.

**Attachment for the record:*

State of the Village

- Overview -

April 18, 2022

Board Actions/Activity during Preceding Year

- On July 5, 2021, the Village Hall was reopened to the public and staff returned full-time, ending an over 15-month closure due to the pandemic.
- Maintained the Village's designation as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation and again this year's State of the Village report will include a reading of the Proclamation so that we can continue that designation through 2022.

For the third year in a row, the Village also received the PLANT (People Loving and Nurturing Trees) Award from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

- Last year, the Board said farewell to 10-year Board Member Richard Ruda of Newland Street, and welcomed new member Lou Morsberger of Cedar Parkway. Lou, along with Gary Crockett, Linda Willard and David Winstead were sworn in during a ceremony held on the porch at the Village Hall last June.
- The Board authorized a statement, to be included both prior to the Village history in the Resident Directory and on the website, to acknowledge the abhorrent views about race held by the Village's founder (Francis G. Newlands) and his associates. The statement rejects these views as being incompatible with the inclusive, welcoming and diverse community that the Village is today.
- The Board approved the installation of a speed hump in the 100 block of Newlands Street located between Brookville and Broad Branch Roads.
- The Board authorized the police department's implementation of a body-worn camera program, which will begin this summer.
- On the environmental front, we maintained the Village's designation as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation (and again this year's State of the Village report will include a reading of the Proclamation so that we can continue that designation into 2022) and for the third year in a row, the

Village also received the PLANT (People Loving and Nurturing Trees) Award from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

- We did not do our normal spring tree planting last spring due to the potential damage from the cicada emergence. In the fall, Public Works planted twelve (12) trees along Village rights-of-way and in Village parks, in an abbreviated planting effort. This spring, approximately 35 trees are planned for installation throughout the Village.

Code Amendments

- Amended the Charter to adopt a by-mail election process consistent with the process implemented in 2021 during the pandemic. The amendments to the Charter included moving Election Day from the first to the third Saturday in May.
- Adopted Juneteenth National Independence Day as an official Village holiday.
- Amended the Building Code to allow the installation of electric vehicle chargers within the setbacks and in the public right-of-way.
- Authorized the Village Manager to determine that certain vaccinations and inoculations are required as a fitness for duty condition for employment.
- Reminder: the ban on the use of gas-powered blowers and the prohibition on the use of cosmetic lawn pesticides are now both in effect. Residents have a responsibility to ensure that their contractors are operating in compliance with the gas-blower ban and with the prohibition on the use of pesticides on lawns.

Advocacy

- The Board has submitted letters regarding:
 - Thrive Montgomery 2050, including requesting that the council ensure that the rewrite of the county's general plan reflects the broad spectrum of input and feedback from across the county as this document will serve as the basis for all zoning, development, and public investment to occur across the county over the next 30 years. The council heeded this guidance as expressed by the Village and other communities and is engaging in more public outreach over the coming months.
 - Pepco rate case before the Maryland Public Service Commission for a systemwide conversion of existing streetlights to light emitting diode or LED at no up-front cost to local jurisdictions. The Board's letter urged the commission to ensure that Pepco was required to work with municipalities to determine the appropriate street lighting in

converting to LED (the case was summarily denied by the commission)

- Also related to streetlighting, in support of state bills to improve the ability for municipalities to purchase, own and maintain the streetlights within their communities (the legislation did not pass in the 2022 session, but it is anticipated it will be re-filed in 2023)
- Connecticut Avenue Pedestrian Crossing at Lenox Street urging consideration of a HAWK signal rather than a traditional 3-color signal due to concerns with the functionality of a 3-color signal at the intersection. The HAWK signal has now been approved by the Maryland State Highway Administration, and installation is expected later this calendar year.
- Farm Women's Market Project in support of the county funding needed to convert the current county-owned surface parking lots into a park to serve as a buffer between the Town of Chevy Chase and the commercial development proposed along Wisconsin Avenue

Ongoing Projects

- Municipal Storm Drain Project – The plans have been finalized and County permits issued for this project to address stormwater runoff concerns along the block bordered by West Lenox and Hesketh Streets and by Magnolia and Cedar Parkways. Village Counsel is finalizing the draft easement agreements and the project is expected to be bid for construction in early FY2023.
- The Board approved the installation of a trench drain along the east side of the alley that runs between Grafton and Oliver Streets to remediate stormwater runoff concerns associated with the alley's elevation.
- Sidewalk Maintenance - Public Works continues to perform maintenance on the Village's network of brick sidewalks, to address trip hazards and uneven areas. This work is ongoing, and residents are encouraged to report areas that require attention.
- Buffer Project - For the coming year, the Board has authorized a capital project to address erosion and stormwater runoff concerns in the Buffer. This project will include stormwater management controls and landscaping that will thrive along the heavily shaded area.

Community Activities

- Although all indoor Village events were canceled in 2021 due to the pandemic, we were able to celebrate, with modifications, Independence Day with the annual July 4 Parade and Party.

- The Board approved a donation of a \$41,000 to the Friends of Chevy Chase Circle (in addition to the \$47,000 donated in FY2021) in support of the group's project in coordination with the National Park Service to install lighting in the circle's fountain, and new landscaping.

Fiscal Matters

- FY2021 ended with a surplus of just over \$816,000, which was added to Village reserves.
- The Village received a clean audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021.
- We began the current FY2022 fiscal year with a reserves balance just over \$13.262 million.
- Due to income tax revenues exceeding expectations, receipt of the first tranche of American Rescue Plan Act funds, and reduced expenses including cancellation of the Halloween and Holiday Parties toward the end of last year, we expect to end the current fiscal year with a surplus bringing the Village's reserves balance near \$13.906 million.
- The proposed FY2023 budget reflects a return to normal operations. The operating budget remains relatively flat and has been increased due to inflationary factors such as personnel and contract expense increases, and expenses related to a new body-worn camera program in the police department.

In the Year Ahead:

- Resume community events following best practices related to limiting transmission of COVID-19.
- Continued study and consideration of traffic calming measures to address cut-through traffic on the east side of the Village.
- Stormwater Survey to understand where the critical stormwater needs are in the community so we can budget funds and plan projects accordingly.
- Adoption of a new landscape plan for the greenspace on Chevy Chase Circle between Magnolia Parkway and Grafton Street, historically referred to as the boxwood area.
- Relaunch of a system to accept electronic payments for the annual Holiday Fund for Village staff.